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Millennium for All Report on Securitization of the Millennium Public Library
Prepared for the Standing Committee on Protection, Community Services, and Parks
City of Winnipeg, Manitoba

September 9th, 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Millennium for All Report on Securitization of the Millennium Public Library
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Drawing on research from fields of criminal justice studies, equity studies, community development, sociology, critical race theory, library sciences, and urban planning, this report provides city councillors and library management with the necessary evidence on which a decision about securitization of public spaces should be made.

Faced with overwhelming evidence that the current security measures are ineffective at creating safety and effective at diminishing gate counts, creating a racist, ableist, and colonial environment, and diminishing the role of public libraries, **we find no credible evidence to support the library services policy of security screening.**

Key findings in this report include:

Alternatives

- Many other libraries in Canada face challenges similar to Millennium's. No other library has instituted security screenings.
- **Other libraries have embraced inclusive, community-led strategies** including focusing on de-escalation and harm reduction, using in-house security and providing snacks and beverages to patrons (Halifax), using greeters and crisis workers to set a tone of welcome and support, providing on-site counseling (Saskatoon), and adequately staffing and supporting library workers.
- There are ample examples of libraries adopting welcoming strategies which increase both patron and worker safety and which do not have the impact of reducing gate counts.

Security

- **Being safe is not the same as being comfortable. Using security checkpoints to resolve some people's discomfort puts other people in harm's way.** Evidence released through incident reports and the library's own report suggest that library workers face challenges at work as a result of verbal abuse and threatening language. Nobody should work under these conditions. However, these are not issues that are resolvable through the security measures that have been implemented. The security screenings leave the concerns of library workers unresolved while directly putting people who rely on the library for access to life-sustaining information and respite in harm's way.
- Keeping people out of the library contributes to a general lack of security, stability, and wellbeing in our communities among members who previously had their needs met by the library. The best way for the library

to contribute to a safe and secure downtown is to be a welcoming and inclusive space for all, and to advocate for the proliferation of other public spaces downtown where people can meet their needs.

Impacts of Security Screening

- Research shows that marginalized communities are most likely to be pushed away through policies of securitization.
- The impacts of security are likely to be severe for Indigenous people, Black people, residential school survivors, formerly imprisoned people, people under community correctional supervision, survivors of sexual assault, survivors of state violence and refugees, trans and non-binary people, disabled people, and other community members for whom interactions with surveillance structures, wanding, and other interrogration is more likely to trigger trauma and cause harm. **This barrier leads some of the people who benefit most from library services to avoid the library, effectively limiting their access.**

Racialization

- Institutional racism is when policies like the library security policy have a disproportionate negative impact on users who are Black, Indigenous, or people of colour (BIPOC), regardless of their intent. We know that security screening is an institutionally racist policy because BIPOC library users are more likely to be screened more aggressively and to be hassled by security, effectively deterring them from using the library.
- The **library services management have extensively mobilized dog-whistle racist language** in their remarks justifying the security screening. Dog-whistle racism is when racist tropes are mobilized through coded language and suggestion, rather than explicitly racialized language.

Reconciliation

- Winnipeg has a stated commitment to reconciliation between settlers and Indigenous peoples; **this policy is not what reconciliation looks like.** The security screenings are known to disproportionately prevent Indigenous patrons from accessing spaces.
- Other libraries have launched Reconciliation and Relationship Building Strategy and Action Plans, including decolonization outcomes (Thunder Bay), drawing on best practices of critical librarianship and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Evidence

- The evidence provided by the Library Services team to justify this policy is inadequate. **Claims about the degree of unsafety have not been borne out by the evidence** they have released.
- Library Services needs **to release the full, raw data** used as evidence in their report, including gate counts since 2013, detailed incident reports since 2013, survey instruments, and other tools used to justify their claims. Social scientists and the public should be able to validate their data analysis.

Recommendations for action based on scholarly research and outreach to librarians across North America include:

- **Remove the security screenings.**
- **Develop an "exit strategy"** for removing security screening and developing a culture of supportive safety with firm deliverables, strategies for community and staff engagement, and deadlines.
- **Increase staffing**, including paid community greeters, outreach workers, Elders, crisis workers, and in-house security. Library to patron ratios should be improved significantly.
- **Increase supports for staff,** including de-escalation, harm reduction, and anti-oppression training. Increase the Employee Assistance Program and provide immediate counseling post-incident.
- **Consult to develop community-led solutions.** Commit to rebuilding trust in the community. Conduct actual community consultations and rebuild community connections that have been damaged by securitization. In other cities, community-led librarianship has included offering food and drink in the library, partnering with community agencies, and removing barriers to access.
- **Think beyond the library.** Additional safe, warm spaces must be available in Winnipeg. Drop-in spaces and other public spaces need to be opened, not enclosed.

Appendix A provides a response to Library Services Report to PCSP released on September 3rd, 2019. It highlights:

- **An endorsement of Winnipeg Public Service Recommendations 1-4,** to provide increased funding to WPL for Crisis Workers, a community-led cultural provider program, and non-violent crisis intervention (NVCI), mental health first aid and substance awareness training for staff.
- The Library Services report also recommends "recruiting volunteer community hosts as the 'first face' of the library." **We endorse skilled, trained, paid employee community hosts** —not volunteers.
- **Gate counts have dropped at least 25%** since January, which represents a significant threat to the sustainability of Millennium Library. This is a significant decline in use for an institution intended for widespread public use.
- **The report is based on faulty evidence.** The data used to support the call for permanent security barriers provides no such support.
- **No substantive community consultation has occurred.**

Appendix B provides a copy of librarian Brianne Selman's Open Letter on Millennium Library Security Screening Procedures. Appendix C includes responses to the security measures from the cultural community in Winnipeg, and Appendix D compiles all the recommendations in this report.

Appendix C provides responses to the Millennium Library security barrier from cultural workers.

Appendix D compiles recommended policy changes.

WHY MILLENNIUM MATTERS

I'm a cultural worker and lifelong Winnipegger, and the downtown Library is where I've always felt most at home in my home city. I've been going there weekly since I was a kid, first to the old Centennial and then to the new Millennium. Wonderful librarians have assisted me throughout my life as a reader and a writer, from guiding me through the card catalogue for a junior high-school essay, to helping me with research for the song lyrics I work on at a desk by the big wall of windows. My fellow library users have been a big influence on me, too—I love the feeling of industry in the Millennium, the sense of everyone working and living in the same free, collective public space, encountering ideas and one another. Much more than Portage and Main, the Millennium Library is the most important intersection in Winnipeg, where all its diverse communities meet.

The Winnipeg Library's mission statement, "to enrich the lives of all Winnipeg citizens and their communities," shows I'm not alone in my belief in the importance of this space. Its stated strategic goals, to serve as "the centre for information access, the hub of community connections, the heart of discovery and creativity, and the place for literacy and lifelong learning," encapsulate my understanding of what a library should be—a place of equality, community, agency, and access to information.

This is why so many Winnipeggers were dismayed when library management suddenly enacted exclusionary and intrusive airport-style security at the entrance to Millennium in February 2019—it felt like a betrayal of the professed mission statement and strategic goals of our library. A handful of bureaucrats introduced these security measures, unprecedented in Canada, without consulting elected officials, community groups, other libraries, or library patrons. Had they reached out to any of these stakeholders they would have learned there are many more effective and just alternatives to surveillance and policing.

Millennium for All, a group of concerned citizens, has been working since then to help put forward a vision for the library both patrons and workers deserve. With this report, produced

entirely by volunteer labour, Millennium for All hopes to counter the prejudice and lies management has used to attempt to justify their reactionary security theatre.

As our report makes clear, the new barriers at Millennium are more than just physical. Because of the classist, racialized, ableist, and gendered nature of security and policing, they exclude some people at the outset. They risk re-traumatizing people who have been victims of state violence, discouraging many citizens from fully participating in the life of our city. As a worker in Winnipeg's cultural community, I know that access to public libraries is an important way for people to see themselves in arts and culture and is crucial in the development of self-expression and creativity. At a time when we desperately need more artistic voices to amplify the diverse stories of our city, the new security threatens to stifle them before they have a chance to be heard.

More selfishly, I want the barriers to come down so I can return to my workplace. I prefer a carrell on the top half of the stairs, so I can look out at the park and along the rows of other Winnipeggers reading and talking and eating and playing video games and napping and writing poems. It is the place where I am inspired and where I feel I belong, and I really miss it.

—John K. Samson, musician and past Winnipeg Library Writer in Residence

OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

Many library systems work to balance public access and security, and the general consensus in the library community in Canada has been that invasive security screening including searches must be avoided. Exclusionary security measures erode trust between libraries and communities. Security screening disproportionately impacts the patrons who depend on libraries the most, and introduces unnesessary venues for racial profiling, (re)traumatization, and conflict. Despite these risks, which have been widely analyzed in scholarly research and among public librarians, on February 25, 2019, the downtown Millennium Library branch of the Winnipeg Public Library (WPL) instituted new security measures (Greenslade & Thompson, 2019; Hoye, 2019a; Plett, 2019; Winnipeg Public Library, n.d.-a).

The first of their kind in Canada, the new security measures require library users to go through airport-like security to enter the library. Patrons' bags are searched, a metal detector passes over their bodies, and personal property interpreted as threatening (not all are explicitly against the policy) are confiscated. Some patrons are turned away by security, while others self-select out for reasons we will detail in this report.

WPL's policy was implemented without public consultation. No community members or organizations were invited to weigh in before it was abruptly installed. Even the Library Advisory Board, the citizen board ostensibly in place to provide oversight and community voice in WPL decision making, was not included in the decision.

Winnipeggers have been outraged. Resistance has sprung up all over, from anti-poverty groups, anti-racist activists, housing activists, individual library patrons (Rae, 2019), harm reduction experts, and academics (CBC News, 2019a). Community members held a community consultation (Caruk, 2019), an inter-agency meeting, a read-in (Khan, 2019b; Tkatch & Thompson, 2019), and a read-out (Khan, 2019a). People wrote open letters (Selman, 2019), petitions, editorials (Sinclair, 2019), and letters to the editor. Since February when the policy was implemented, there has been continued, high-visibility community opposition. Those who have opposed it have had their worst fears realized in a dramatic drop in gate counts at Millennium.

At the April 4th, 2019 meeting of the Standing Committee on Protection, Community Service, and Parks, committee members put forward a motion to "consider alternatives to making people safe including an examination of best practices in other similar public facilities in Winnipeg as well as best practices in other Canadian cities and report back with a verbal report in 60 days and a written report in 120 days."

The purpose of our report is to complement the work assigned to the WPL management, drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship that attends to the broader socio-political and economic context. We draw on expertise from critical librarianship, sociology, criminal justice studies, community development, geography, critical race theory, equity studies, and urban planning to provide a comprehensive examination of the new security screening measures. Additionally, we include data from personal correspondence from librarians across Canada to provide a scan of the field. Where appropriate, we also draw on the forthcoming report on the March Community Consultation (Nicholson, forthcoming), which led to the formation of Millennium for All, and cite relevant media coverage on Millennium's security screening.

Based on our research, we have found no evidence to support security screening in public libraries. This policy is not aligned with the best practices of public librarianship. The policy is not aligned with research on securitization or criminal justice, and runs against decades of work in critical race theory, community development, and equity studies.

Our expert recommendation is that the security screening be removed from Millennium Library. In its place, WPL and the City of Winnipeg should move toward a culture of safety on the floor, not security at the door. This will require a substantial investment in library staffing, in community consultation, and in public spaces in Winnipeg. Further recommendations are found throughout the report, as well as in the conclusion.

The scholarly evidence which underpins our recommendations is reviewed in the sections that follow. In Part 1 of the report, we examine a wide variety of precedents from other libraries and community organizations that face similar challenges and contexts as the Millennium Library. We then explore the impacts of the securitization of the Library, and assess the evidence upon which the decision to implement the security measures was based. In Part 2, we provide a review of the literatures relating to institutional racism, the problems of securitization, and the local context, including the relationship between race and space, and homelessness and space. The report then concludes with a summary and recommendations.

PART 1: PRECEDENTS, IMPACTS, AND PREMISES

WHAT OTHER LIBRARIES ARE DOING

Working in libraries is hard: many libraries are understaffed and under-resourced, the work can be stressful, and the support minimal. Library workers encounter many different user cultures, some of them competing or conflicting, in close proximity. Libraries are spaces used by communities across racial, class, ability, and other lines. They are one of the few spaces where the full diversity of a city is on display. While it is beautiful, it can also be hard to meet the varied needs of patrons.

Library administrators expressed concern about an increase in violent incidents in Millennium Library (CBC News, 2019b). Some workers have reported feeling unsafe in their workplace; indeed, this was a factor in the decision to bring in the security measures. People should feel safe in their workplaces, and something should be done to address the substantive concerns raised by workers. The question is what, exactly, should be done?

None of the challenges at Millennium are unique to Winnipeg. Libraries all over Canada face similar constraints and tensions.Winnipeg's particular context of settler colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism demands that local Indigenous-led solutions be at the forefront. In addition, we must look at the broader context of urban public libraries in Canada. We look to examples of effective solutions that other urban libraries have mobilized, and draw on scholarly research to supplement personal correspondence from workers at Canadian libraries that are comparable to Millennium. Simple queries to urban public libraries—many of which deal with similar incidents as Winnipeg—provided an abundance of great ideas and alternatives to airport-style security. None of the public library systems in Canada that we could find use airport-style security screenings, and many are deeply opposed to increased securitization.

COMMUNITY-LED LIBRARIANSHIP

Many libraries have also adopted principles of "community-led librarianship," an approach developed in Canada, and widespread enough that it was a permanent column in the Canadian Library Association's publication *Feliciter*. Community-led librarianship attempts to deeply involve the community and to remove barriers for traditionally excluded groups, as well as to find ways to invite socially excluded groups to be a part of service planning. Crucially, community-led librarianship first looked at the people who are *not* using libraries, to start to identify some of the reasons. It found a disconnect between why libraries thought communities were not coming, and why community members themselves say they are not coming. It is not because they no longer need the library — it is because of discomfort.

> Public library staff across Canada believes public libraries are inclusive institutions created equally for everyone in the community…. [however] Community members identified barriers in their personal lives and barriers generated by libraries, which made the library an intimidating place to enter and use (Willment, 2019).

Because libraries and their staff represent a particularly middle class and white worldview (de jesus, 2014, Galvan, 2015, Ettarh, 2015, Gohr, 2017) they often unintentionally (and sometimes intentionally) demonstrate this worldview in their service provision. “For every person who finds the library safe and pleasant there is another person who feels uncomfortable and unwelcome. This is a hard truth to accept, especially for people who see the library as one of society's truly accessible and democratic institutions” (DeFaveri, 2005). Community-led librarianship requires a much deeper involvement of community members—instead of just library workers—assessing, planning, and delivering services. “Only by stepping outside of the traditional service planning model, and engaging socially excluded community members, in the community, can librarians know if they are meeting their needs.” (Willment, 2019).

Crucially, community-led librarianship cannot be achieved by simply copying the good ideas of other library systems. It needs to be rooted in conversations with, planning with, and the specificities of a particular time and place and community. Because of how deeply anti-Indigenous sentiment runs in Winnipeg, and the racialized structure of downtown exclusion (Toews, 2018), the nature of issues the WPL will need to confront are different than elsewhere. To do this, they need to have have the important consultations with community, and in particular, with the Indigenous communities, Black communities, and communities of colour that live in downtown Winnipeg near Millennium Library.

TAKING CARE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY BASICS FIRST

Many of these approaches to safety echo some of the basics suggested by Steve Albrecht, a former police officer who now consults on library safety and security and wrote the book *Library Safety: Better Communication, Safer Facilities*. His main recommendations include:

- Clear and consistent code of conduct that is highly visible
- Allowing people to be visibly intoxicated if they are not breaking other rules of conduct
- Having staff that are empowered to deal with incidents and know how to de-escalate
- Making assessments of library floor safety
- Adequate staffing

In general, Albrecht’s approach leans toward inclusion and de-escalation wherever possible, recognizing that many policies are biased and exclusionary. “Bag searches are invasive for a library.... People will not want to go to a library if they are searched as if they are about to get on an airplane” (Steve Albrecht, Personal Correspondence). His suggestions include improving the training of security guards, which could be in line with the innovative programs at Halifax and proposed for Thunder Bay: “More security on the floor helps, when we have the right guards, who have a useful combination of service skills and security vigilance. Some guards have both, some have neither” (Steve Albrecht, Personal Correspondence).

Albrecht also suggests that ramping up to airport-style screenings is an unnecessary escalation, and that there are many easier steps WPL could have pursued first: “Your facilities should move in a crawl-walk-run fashion for

security improvements, starting with a review of the Security Incident Reports that will suggest what improvements to make. In other words, match the potential security solutions with the previous security problems" (Steve Albrecht, Personal Correspondence). A review of the security incidents that have been released and widely reported on (mainly showing that WPL's perception of the situation was disproportionate[CBC News]) suggests that there are many areas for improvement that have nothing to do with excluding patrons.

The biggest takeaway from Albrecht's work, however, is that there needs to be a commitment to developing and kindly enforcing a culture of safety, rather than of fear. This culture needs to be attentive to the stories about patrons as well as staff. Has the story become one of a library overrun with an unspoken but definitely racialized series of violent and intoxicated people? Or is the library a place where people are met where they are at in life, with kindness and empathy, and all seen as worthy of belonging to the space, while abuse and harassment of workers is not tolerated as part of a community of mutual respect?

RETHINKING THE MEANING OF SECURITY

For example, Thunder Bay currently employs external security forces, with whom they are working closely to develop similar approaches to dealing with incidents. However, in light of the ways security forces have enduring negative relationships with Indigenous and racialized communities, they are looking at ways to phase out the security forces altogether. The end goal is an approach more in line with their values as an "empathy-driven library service."

> While having uniformed security staff in the library reassures some staff and patrons I also think that it can give the message that the library is not a safe space. Our medium term aim is to remove security staff from the library and redirect the resources to build alternative capacity within the organization. (John Pateman, TBPL, Personal Correspondence).

Halifax Public Libraries (HPL) already use their own security guards, rather than contracting them out.

> Halifax Central Library has security staff for all open hours. We are unique in that our security staff have all the qualifications for a security officer position but they have been hired to become part of our Central Library staff team. This has allowed our security team to be trained in and demonstrate our values every day. The team is small and works closely with other staff and they know many of our regular customers by name. In addition, we have recently hired a social worker and our security staff report directly to the social worker. (Halifax Public Library, Personal Correspondence)

HPL specifically takes this approach to transform security into something more welcoming than prohibitive, similar to the community hosts program at Mount Carmel Clinic in Winnipeg (see Lessons from Community Organizations, below).

> It is important to us that we set the tone for Central Library as a safe and welcoming space for everyone. Some of this has been achieved by knowing our customers well and establishing a

> respectful relationship before behavior issues may arise. We recognize the importance of preventing issues and/or de-escalating issues before problems erupt. (Halifax Public Library, Personal Correspondence)

This approach, and these types of in-house security that are actually part of the Library's public services, could help to consciously build a culture that prioritizes safety and well-being without being exclusionary.

A CULTURE OF WELCOME IS A CULTURE OF PREVENTION

Halifax's program of offering food and drinks to patrons is also an approach to relationship building that is preventative. By centering relationships with patrons, library staff can be among the people in their lives who they can call on to access necessities, which prevents people's needs/stress from reaching crisis proportions—libraries can also be a space where people connect with each other to get their needs met without relying on uninvited government intervention. "Recently, we have received some food grants which have allowed us to offer a free hot beverage and healthy snack to customers twice/week. This has been a very successful way for us to develop a good rapport with our customers, especially our more vulnerable customers" (HPL, Personal Correspondence). By inviting patrons in—*particularly* those who may be socially vulnerable—HPL is creating a more inclusive library, and also crucially preventing one of the stress factors—being hungry—that can escalate situations.

Similarly, Regina Public Libraries take a dual approach that focuses on safety and also prevention in the form of being welcoming. When it comes to safety, they make a distinction in approach between major incidents (where the focus is on "empathetic, timely, consistent, and decisive support") and minor incidents (where the focus is on "learning, development, improvement, and solution based support") (RPL, Personal Correspondence).

It is important to remember that as much as library workers do not want to deal with people in crisis situations, people in crisis also do not want to be in crisis. People who are poor spend significantly more of their time and energy arranging for their very basic necessities (CCPA, 2009) and staving off crisis. Understanding this is the first step toward implementing solutions where the library is standing in solidarity with patrons rather than trying (unsuccessfully) to work against them. People most vulnerable to these crises are the ones with the most important knowledge about how to avoid them, and there should be a permanent place for them in the library as a source of expertise and peer support.

Additional safety-focused changes at the Regina Public Libraries include:

- requesting staff use the main doors to enter and exit, to increase staff presence in that area,
- reviewing physical spaces,
- changing the children's area to specifically be for children and their caregivers.

When it comes to welcoming patrons, RPL has implemented:

- a rotating greeter role to provide better services at peak time and also be aware of potential incidents earlier,
- roving reference staff to increase staff presence on the floor,

- homelessness training for staff focused on empathetic service,
- continual staff training with role playing based on real incidents to support staff in developing responses and customer service,
- customer service and experience training,
- working with community groups that support mental health services,
- having all staff aware of information about things like where people can go to shower, get clothing, shelter, food, and more.

(RPL, Personal Correspondence).

PATRONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

As well as looking to involve community members more directly, libraries across North America have made a concerted effort to make services more accessible to people experiencing homelessness. Corina Bardoff documents some of the ways various libraries have made efforts to become more inclusive—the Forsyth County Public Library in North Carolina, for example, used their "one book, one community" program to develop more understanding in their entire community about people experiencing homelessness (2018, p.13). Bardoff recounts the American Library Association's suggestions for libraries to be proactive in addressing poverty—removal of barriers like late fees, collection development that addresses issues around poverty, community awareness, and training staff to better understand the issues (14). More examples can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/extending-our-reach-reducing-homelessness-through-library-engagement-6.

As downtown Winnipeg is the major hub for services and supports for people experiencing homelessness, it is no surprise that many of Millennium Library's patrons are homeless. Through small actions, such as providing snacks and services, Millennium can support and create a welcoming space for its homeless patrons.

STAFFING SUPPORTS

There are clear themes from public libraries in Canada and the larger conversations around public librarianship that demonstrate a commitment to building a different culture that looks at safety—of library workers and patrons—as a deeper issue of inclusion and belonging. Workers are provided tools, training, and adequate staffing levels so that they feel safer and secure, and also provided with consistent messages that patron inclusion is important. Patrons are provided with a welcoming space—one where they are acknowledged, welcomed, and valued, even if they come from communities—or look or act in ways—that make some middle class white library workers uncomfortable. These themes and policies are aligned with WPL's goals of creating welcoming and accessible destinations, and should be implemented.

Having adequate staffing levels of library workers is crucial for all of these programs to work, and for library workers to feel part of a culture of safety rather than one based on fear of their own patrons. Chronic under-resourcing — which has happened since the cuts of the 2000s and has not been addressed in recent years — also leads to workers feeling stressed and precarious. **The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives**

Alternative Budget (2018) compares WPL's 2017 staffing levels (285 Full Time Employee positions) to that of Edmonton (517.4 FTE), a city with a comparable population size to Winnipeg, and Halifax (333 FTEs), a city with only 2/3s of the population of Winnipeg. It is no wonder that Winnipeg library workers feel vulnerable when they are so clearly understaffed.

ANTI-OPPRESSION TRAINING, CULTURAL COMPETENCY, AND BEYOND

The practices of librarianship can often replicate inequities in society at large, including a predisposition to prioritize the white, middle class experience as universal and correct. This ties into concepts of 'comfort' and 'safety' that may be unconsciously racialized.

> Librarians are a barrier because we are mired in a culture of comfort. Like most people we remain where we are comfortable: comfortable with the programs we offer, comfortable with the services we provide, and comfortable with the people we serve. Even our challenges are comfortable: to do more of what we always do for the people we always serve. As a result we often fail to serve communities that do not look, feel, or think like us. (DeFaveri, 2006)

Critical librarianship and similar veins of progressive librarianship and community librarianship have worked to highlight and respond to systems of structural privilege and racism (more on this below).

Many of these approaches to making libraries more welcoming and inclusive echo some of the suggestions from Fobazi Ettarh (2014) for libraries to recognize the intersectionality of oppression, including for their own workers. Ettarh's suggestions for recognizing intersectionality of oppression and supporting BIPOC library workers include:

- Provide staff with diversity training
- Address signs of microaggressions and injustice in the workplace
- Investigate complaints quickly, thoroughly, and sensitively
- Take disciplinary action against those who break the policy.

Recognizing that the security has likely increased stress for the BIPOC workers in particular in the library (though clearly the entire situation has been stressful for all) requires careful attention to their experience and vigilance around the way the library culture speaks about racism and inequality.

David J. Hudson points out that diversity and cultural competency training "reduces racism to individual relations, obscuring analysis of broader structures of racial domination behind an emphasis on paradoxically deracializing interpersonal understanding and harmony" (2017, p.17). Similarly, Fleming and Rhodes (2017) suggest that while diversity training may have somewhat limited applications for library workers who may belong to different communities, intersectional conversations might offer an opportunity for deeper change. WPL should consider encouraging, rather than shutting down, these types of conversations, with careful attention paid to listening to people whose intersectional identities of race or class might leave them feeling particularly vulnerable after management enacted the security procedures.

It is not enough to simply talk about and train toward diversity and inclusion. When we reduce racism to simply exclusion, and diversity to inclusion, we can mask ongoing structural powers. With its focus on individualized understandings of racial and ethnic difference rather than systems of power, diversity trainings do not respond to or provide tools for staff to contextualize difference in the context of economic, socio-political, and historicized/ ongoing harm.

What is needed are more concrete actions to address racism and colonialism. The problem is not just that Millennium Library is not diverse enough, nor that it is exclusive. To create a public library that is truly diverse, truly inclusive, it must first be actively anti-racist and anti-discrimination (Kendi, 2019) by moving *beyond* diversity training (which may still be an important first step for Winnipeg Public Library).

Anti-oppression training might be one solution for WPL to pursue. Anti-oppression training moved beyond the superficial politics of inclusion (Ahmed, 2012), toward addressing the systemic forces at play in creating and sustaining inequities along intersectional lines of race, gender, colonialism, ability, and other relations of power (James, 1995).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Hire community greeters and outreach workers to be the first faces that people see when they enter the Library. Consider locating a crisis worker in the lobby or very close to the main doors.
- Instead of outsourcing, hire security that have job security, better wages, and whose training is rooted in de-escalation and harm reduction practices instead of profiling, containment, and exclusion practices
- Create a culture of welcome by:
    - Hiring and supporting more Indigenous and newcomer staff at Millennium, and commit to providing them adequate workplace support.
    - Providing training for staff and resources for vulnerable patrons, including snacks and beverages
- Follow the recommendations of Steve Albrecht for doing a Security Incident Analysis and a Library Spatial Analysis to increase safety on the floor, instead of just focusing on the door.
- Develop policies to make the library more accessible to people experiencing poverty and homelessness.
- Support library staff by:
    - Acknowledging the uniqueness of the additional workload of Millennium by having different requirements (i.e., demonstrated skills in working with vulnerable communities) and training for Millennium staff positions.
    - Providing sufficient supports for staff. The current Employee Assistance Program is limited and not able to respond to traumatic incidents, leaving staff feeling vulnerable and unsupported. Explore additional dedicated psychological support staff. Provide an adequate decompression room for staff at Millennium.
    - Reducing job precarity at Millennium and ensuring adequate staffing to allow workers to respond safely to incidents, as well as increasing part-time hours and hiring more full-time positions.
    - Providing anti-racism and anti-oppression training to library staff on a regular basis.

INVITING SERVICES IN

SOCIAL WORKERS AND ADVOCACY

Patrick Lloyd, a social worker embedded in a library, describes libraries as a 'protective factor' that can help reduce some of the outside structural risks faced by vulnerable patrons:

> We cannot (and will not) advocate for keeping poor or struggling individuals out of the library. We cannot force a patron with poor hygiene to bathe. We will not remove a patron's personal belongings, even if they are in a shopping cart parked in front of the building. Viewing the library as a protective factor, individuals such as these are precisely the folks who most need to be able to access our institution, not excluded from it. (Lloyd, 2019)

Many libraries use their social workers effectively—for providing the social inclusion and harm reduction training that shifts from a culture of suspicion to one of empathy and welcome, for supervising and training library security, and for being advocates for the most vulnerable patrons. These are notably absent at Winnipeg Public Library.

Social work cannot solve the problems of library patrons, and can cause harm if their interventions are not responsive to patrons own articulations of their needs. However, adequately supported and well thought out social work can provide significant relief to patrons and staff by advocating for the needs of patrons that can't be met by professional librarians.

Lloyd's call for the Library to be an advocate for socially excluded and vulnerable people was echoed in the March community consultation. "There's no reason that the library can't be in an advocate role for their patrons," said Celine Basto. "The library could be pushing the City and the Province for help on some of these other issues – for more shelters, more affordable housing, and for a safe injection site in Winnipeg" (Nicholson, forthcoming). Libraries and library workers cannot be expected to be experts in areas beyond information sciences and patron services, but recognizing there is a need is still important. As James Wilt observed in his investigation into security at the Millennium Library, "Ultimately, libraries are last-ditch stopgaps that can't provide the deeper solutions of affordable rent and strong social services. But they are nevertheless a critical Band-Aid, which is now being ripped off – with nothing to replace it" (Wilt, 2019).

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

Many libraries offer additional services and supports. Thunder Bay Public Library has nurses as well as social workers in their downtown branch. They also, as an example of community-led librarianship, involve community agencies and members in planning services and delivery. "We also have a Community Action Panel, Youth Advisory Council and Indigenous Advisory Council who give us guidance on safety matters. We know that some members of the Indigenous community do not feel safe in our libraries and so this is a focus within our Reconciliation and Relationship Building Action Plan" (TBPL, Personal Correspondence).

Halifax Public Library also works closely with other community services. “All staff in HPL receive access to non-violent crisis intervention training, regular first aid, mental health first aid and we are just beginning to include naloxone training as part of our first aid training. Our staff and especially our social worker works closely with other service providers in our community such as Shelter Nova Scotia, Mobile Outreach Street Health, the downtown Community Navigator and our local community liaison officer in the provision of services to our community” (HPL, Personal Correspondence). Similarly, Saskatoon Libraries have recently partnered with Saskatchewan Health to provide drop-in mental health counselling services in library branches (CBC News, Aug 9, 2019).

Winnipeg has already existing infrastructure that WPL could partner with: WRHA public health nurses, street connections, Manitoba Harm Reduction Network, Bear Clan, Mama Bear Clan, our place safe space, Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition, and others. There is vast knowledge, experience, and relationship from which Millennium and WPL could learn.

Building strong relationships with communities, particularly Indigenous, newcomer, and socially excluded communities, is work that individual librarians at WPL have done fantastic work on. The system, however, broke a lot of those relationships with the security measures, and will have to develop a viable strategy for removing the security screenings that focuses on rebuilding trust with communities and other community services. As WPL’s own Monique Woroniak commented (2013), when dealing with Indigenous (and other) communities, library work is about building relationships: “Be consistent and kind. Create services that allow your system and the people who work in it to be seen as familiar and genuinely friendly. You need to be present to build trust and a relationship where information flows from the public to the library.”

Libraries support patrons by providing them with the information resources they may need — as long as patrons feel comfortable entering the library. Libraries also can be more proactive in offering services, such as mental health, harm reduction, housing, and crisis-resources on the spot. WPL already does some of this work with newcomer agencies, but the security screens represent a large step backwards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Hire social workers trained in client-led care to support library staff, as well as to provide resources to the broader community.
- Repair and build relationships with community groups that provide health and mental health supports, harm reduction services, housing support, and other key supports by removing the security barriers and engaging in community consultations.
- Invite relevant community groups and services to co-locate, as in the examples above.

LESSONS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the wisdom of other libraries across Canada, local communities offer alternatives. The Winnipeg Library users and community groups organized a consultation on March 14, 2019, and the reported by Jacqueline Nicholson is forthcoming. The consultation highlighted that Millennium Library is seen as part of an ecosystem of community organizations in Winnipeg's inner city. Many community organizations face similar challenges to Millennium, and have a wealth of experience that they shared generously. "Most in attendance agreed that the best way to generate alternative solutions would be rigorous consultation with community. Organizations like the Bear Clan, Aboriginal Youth Opportunities, and Rainbow Warriors were examples given of community-led groups developing approaches to public safety that extend beyond police and security guards" (Nicholson, forthcoming). By consulting with the police before community groups, Millennium missed an opportunity to build strong connections and learn from local experts about a much broader range of safety-building practices that go far beyond what the police can offer.

COMMUNITY HOSTS

Many non-profits in Winnipeg's downtown core balance staff safety with service provision. Neighbourhood and youth centres, community clinics, and various shelters have developed strategies of relationship building, prevention, and de-escalation, rather than exclusion. Mount Carmel Clinic's community host program is an example that moves away from securitization and instead prioritizes prevention and genuine care for their community. The clinic hires community members as "community hosts" who act as welcoming greeters and much more. They are part of an overall approach of de-escalation:

> Elaine Bishop is a former board member at Mount Carmel who was not able to attend the discussion group, but offered the following comments about the program: "What the clinic found was that with the community hosts building relationship with potentially challenging users of the clinic, that they were in a position to de-escalate situations. They often became informal counselling supports to individuals thereby providing support and preventing potential situations. When crisis occur a variety of senior staff respond and attempt to de-escalate the situation. Sometimes, although as rarely as possible, the police have had to be called. Then senior staff often need to also intervene with the police, whose behaviour can escalate rather than de-escalate situations." (Nicholson, forthcoming)

Community hosts/greeters set a tone of welcoming and belonging, rather than of mistrust and profiling, something that in itself can de-escalate situations by providing a sense of inclusion rather than the heightened emotions caused by security.

This type of approach also requires library workers to recognize the difference between comfort and safety. Many of the incident reports from Millennium display a lack of a clear distinction. Racialized people, drug users, and people experiencing homelessness are often identified as a threat even when their *behaviour* is not disruptive. They experience more aggressive interventions from staff, and now more thorough searching from security. This

profiling can escalate situations with already vulnerable people, in contrast to the approach of making people feel actively welcome, which is more likely to promote benign interactions.

DE-ESCALATION AND HARM REDUCTION

One of the first premises of de-escalation training is that in the vast majority of incidents, people do not set out to have a confrontation. For example, the majority of incidents reported at Millennium have to do with "intoxication." Thunder Bay Public Library is taking a different tack with this: "We have relaxed some of our policies so that the focus is now on patron behaviour. For example, it is ok for a patron to appear intoxicated as long as their behaviour is not problematic. The aim is to de-escalate situations or prevent them from happening in the first place. We debrief after each incident and offer staff support and counselling if they need it" (TBPL, Personal Correspondence). De-escalating conflicts and recognizing that behaviour, not appearance, is central to reducing confrontations and violence, and is more likely to encourage people to behave as if the library is a community to which they belong.

CRISIS WORKERS

The library could also benefit from the model of having actively engaged crisis workers on the library floor, particularly the main and fourth floors, instead of tucked away in offices.

> Rhys Williams, who has worked with Main Street Project and other organizations that serve street-involved Winnipeggers, suggested the library may benefit from the presence of a team of support staff on the floor: crisis and outreach workers specifically trained to respond to challenging behaviours. The key is to deal with arguments, threats, and over-intoxication before they escalate to emergent levels," Williams said. "This is what a crisis worker does; they catch things at a 6/10 and then neutralize the problem by gently supporting the individual, never allowing things to reach a 9 or a 10." (Nicholson, forthcoming)

Rather than being in the library simply for referrals, the crisis workers would be an active part of the floor staffing at Millennium.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recognize the decades of expertise that community organizations have in dealing with complex situations, and reach out to learn from them by:
    - Creating an advisory committee made up of downtown/West End agencies, including those that participated in the community consultation, to advise the library on social policies and procedures.
    - Developing an annual service plan for Millennium Library that consults with the advisory committee on programming, staff training, collections, etc.
    - Demonstrate a tangible commitment to celebrate and acknowledge diverse downtown communities.
- Replace the airport-style security screenings with well paid and trained community hosts.
- Make the front entry a place of inclusion, rather than a visible sign of exclusion.

- Require and support training for all Millennium staff on de-escalation, and harm reduction, and cultural competency/ anti-oppression.
- Hire additional crisis workers whose first responsibility is de-escalation and support on the library floor.

THE IMPACTS OF SECURITY

Why is it that libraries across Canada have gone to such lengths to avoid security screening? Not only is the idea of barricading an essential public service anathema to the profession of librarians, but, more significantly, it is because securitization is ineffective at increasing safety, and puts vulnerable populations at increased risk.

For refugees and other members of the public who have experienced state violence, checkpoints are retraumatizing and provide a significant barrier to entry. For survivors of sexual violence, having hands passed over their bodies can be triggering and retraumatizing. The presence of police-like guards encourages members of communities that have been targeted by police, including LGBTQ2S+ people to avoid screening. For people with disabilities and people with health concerns, screening creates invasive and time-consuming barriers, through which health supplies and accessibility aids may be confiscated or damaged. For Indigenous survivors of residential schools, child theft, and foster care, and ongoing state surveillance, engagement with uniformed authorities compounds anxieties, feelings of being unwelcome, and feeling at risk of institutional violence (Comack 2012). Checkpoints are more likely to escalate and exacerbate drug-related altercations. Meth-induced psychosis is more likely to be triggered through confrontation and the creation of stressful situations (Dobchuk-Land, 2019). In each of these cases, security screening creates barriers to accessing the library and its programming, and creates the conditions for staff and patrons to be made *less safe* by escalating tensions before any incident has occurred.

Libraries also serve patrons with mental illness, another set of conditions which can make people vulnerable if their other human needs are not being met, and which leads to an increased likelihood of being frequently, unfairly targeted by security forces. Despite the fact that when their illness is visible, people with mental illness are much more likely to be the victims of violence than the perpetrators, they are often viewed as inherently unsafe, which can create friction with security forces not trained in de-escalation or harm reduction (Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, 2010). Mental illness and the biases against people experiencing them are compounded by poverty and homelessness.

Research shows that police *and* private security firms unfairly target and respond with violence to racialized and otherwise stigmatized people (Diphoorn, 2017; Kempa & Singh, 2008; Markwick et al., 2015). This can happen in implicit and explicit ways. The implicit ways in which this happens is described in greater detail below, in the section on institutional racism. The explicit bias occurs through harassment that targets BIPOC library patrons. As library manager Ed Cuddy noted in his PCSP testimony in April, Millennium's contracted security guards were inadequately trained around bias and cultural competence (April 4th, 2019). The literature shows that no amount of training is adequate when policing always relies on and reinforces racial stereotypes (Tator, Henry, Smith, & Brown, 2006)

Policing strategies often focus on ridding public spaces of “disorder”, based on the unsubstantiated idea that disorder leads to crime. This idea has furnished a form of policing often called “broken windows” or policing (also sometimes referred to as “zero tolerance” or “disorder” policing) that equates public signs of disorder and people who appear “disorderly” with potential threat (Harcourt, 2005). This is the same logic that governs the security screenings, and it will produce the same results as broken windows policing: the disproportionate targeting of poor people of colour and genderqueer people, an increase in conflict caused by law enforcement intervention, and a chilling effect on the public sphere (Ritchie, 2016).

People who are perceived to be acting ‘disorderly’ in public might be experiencing a range of issues, some of which they may define as problems, some of which are not problems at all. In the context of the implementation of these security checkpoints, the lives of those subject to exclusion are considered only in terms of the disruption they cause. “Disorder” doesn’t have an objective character—it is defined differently and experienced differently by different groups of people (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2005). The library is privileging a conception of safety concerned with “disorder” and a sanitized public space, but unconcerned with the well-being of those who may find themselves in situations which are disruptive.

An added danger of securitization is that it puts constituencies who not only support the library, but are also willing to fight for it, on oppositional footing with libraries' agendas. We see the library patrons who are most willing to take action mobilizing through groups like Millennium for All, and the library administrators dismissing their enthusiasm and pushing them out of consultative processes. The same can be said for some of the Library Advisory board members; those who have opposed the securitization and the lack of consultation were threatened with removal and have since resigned. This process of disempowering the public libraries’ most outspoken advocates erodes the potential solidarity libraries will need as they face a future environment of austerity and imagined scarcity. In the long term, the Winnipeg Public Library will need a mobilized and engaged base of supporters who can help it secure the resources necessary to support a robust urban library infrastructure. If high-energy patrons are alienated, that potential support will be lost.

Already, there has been a decline in support by some of the city’s significant institutional library supporters. Organizations across the city, who once booked events at the library because of its public service mandate, its central location, and in service to sustaining public spaces, have reported that they are no longer booking space. Programming like *Read by Queens* has moved off-site, as have other programs that work with drug-users or formerly imprisoned people. Others have organized alternative viewings (e.g. live-streaming) of their events in the library. The rationales reported differ. Some anticipate some of their audience members being turned away or deterred by security. Some have reported that they are unwilling to subject their members to arbitrary, racist, and retraumatizing screening. Others have expressed an unwillingness to be complicit in the securitization. They reject the idea that a space that was once open and inviting for a wide swath of Winnipeggers no longer is.

FALSE PREMISES

The previous sections demonstrate that other Canadian libraries offer promising alternatives to security screening, and that security screening negatively impacts marginalized groups in ways that are well-established in the literature and easy to anticipate. We now turn to the question of why this policy was implemented. We interpreted the data that has been reported orally by Library Services management, Millennium incident reports released via FIPPA, media reports, and other data. Our analysis suggests that the security screening policy is based on faulty interpretation of the evidence.

Library Services justifies the library security through exaggerated and anecdotal reporting. For example, Mr. Cuddy and Sergeant Kun of WPS reported to PCSP on April 2 and May 22. During their testimonies, they selected and circulated egregious instances of violence in the library, and universalized it to suggest that these were widespread or common occurrences within Millennium. They drew on evocative stories of machetes, trafficking, and sex offenders stories which alarm the public, but which an evaluation of the Millennium Incident Reports accessed through a FIPPA request revealed to be extreme outliers. The scale of violence suggested by Millennium managers has been inappropriately inflated. The scope of incidents in Millennium is actually very different, with the vast majority of incidents being simply intoxication. The question of whether intoxication should even be reported as an incident is refuted in the criminal justice literatures, and by other libraries in Canada.

In contrast, investigative journalism found that perceptions of increased violence have not been supported by evidence. There has not been a significant increase in incidents, and some have argued that “this is an utterly manufactured crisis” (Wilt, 2019). CBC did a freedom of information request for the incident reports and found that for the vast majority, metal detectors would not have had any effect (Glowacki, 2019). The public was told that incidents have been increasingly violent. CBC reporting found that the increase in incidents with weapons was actually negligible. As well, the examples of violence recounted by library management that have been shared do not demonstrate a need for bag checks. Few of the instances that have been shared publicly would have been prevented with bag checks (Glowacki, 2019). The often cited incident of a computer being thrown, for example, would not have been prevented by bag checks or metal detectors.

A FIPPA request revealed that the number and quality of incidents are not aligned with the scale of the intervention that Millennium Library has implemented. If the evidence presented to elected officials relied on outlier cases, it is difficult for the officials to appropriately appraise it. Without a representative interpretation of the complete data set, public policy solutions appropriate to the data cannot be generated.

Additionally, some of the “data” provided as evidence of a security crisis in Millennium has not been specific to Millennium, and yet was used to justify security at Millennium. Early press reported instances of weapons being found in the skywalks and around the library by police (Keele, 2019). However, items found on the same city block cannot and should not be referred to as evidence, most especially for an impactful social policy of exclusion. In another instance, an incident report recounted a library staff person entering the skywalk to initiate contact with a

patron about fortified wine. These incidents, which occur outside the library, cannot be used as evidence for a lack of safety inside the library. Adjacency is not sufficient to set policy.

This is not only a problem of "cherry picking the data" as the Free Press reported (Santin, 2019) and Millennium for All asserted at PCSP in June, but it is also a dangerous practice for public servants to be competing to paint the worst possible picture of Winnipeg to defend their policies.

The implication of the false premises justifying the security measures is that the security is primarily meant to deter people from entering the library. It is not about screening for weapons, but about screening for particular types of people. It is an inappropriate response, akin to collective punishment, and fails to connect the scale and types of problems encountered in the Millennium Library with solutions that have the potential to address those problems.

As well, it is manipulative and unethical in that it cynically misrepresents the data and damages public trust. But even more damaging for the city is the way this generates and reinscribes racialized tropes about downtown Winnipeg. It drums up an unfounded, racialized fear of downtown, as we will analyze in the final section, rather than highlighting the overwhelmingly peaceful social space created by the range of patrons that used to use the Millennium Library. Winnipeg's downtown residents deserve better from city administrators paid to serve all Winnipeggers.

PART 2: UNDERSTANDING THE BACKGROUND

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Institutional racism is defined as "the systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are white and the exclusion of people of color" (Solid Ground, nd.). Institutional racism uses state tools, policies, and employees to create "state-sanctioned and extra-legal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" (Gilmore, 2007). For institutional racism to exist, no racial animus or ill intent is required. We need only examine the disproportionate racialized impact to assess it.

To be clear, race is a social construction, not a biological phenomenon, in which specific ideas about what groups of people do and who they are are attributed to physical features like skin tone, phenotype, hair, and other features. We also see cultural or religious practices marked as racial, when particular practices are ascribed as inherent to particular groups, and are marked as less developed, desirable, or beneficial. There is no scientific basis for these tropes, yet they persist in organizing society in significant ways. One of the ways this happens is through institutional racism.

The securitization of Winnipeg's Millennium Library is a textbook example of institutional racism, as it draws on racial logics to create policies which disproportionately impact citizens who are Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC). Furthermore, the language used by the Millennium Library management demonstrates dog-whistle racist tropes about who belongs, demonstrating the racializing process of securitization.

As described above, security screening in general is known to disproportionately impact BIPOC people. This is reliable, regardless of the personal beliefs or racial/cultural identities of screeners. This is because systems of racial supremacy organize our understandings of safety and the available responses through logics of racialization.

Implicit bias is one way this occurs. According to the Ohio State University's Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity,

> implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. (Kirwan, 2015)

Bias occurs when people (of any racial or ethnic background) respond to BIPOC people in ways that assume their criminality or deviance. In this way, BIPOC people are selected for screening more often, screened more

aggressively, and treated more poorly than their white counterparts, leading to disproportionately high rates of criminalization. Another way that security screening can create disproportionate racial impact is through deterrence and intimidation. BIPOC people may be more likely to opt out of security screening based on their (evidence-based, and attentive to personal lived experience) feeling that they are likely to be targeted and abused by security processes. Rather than subject themselves to this harm, BIPOC community members may avoid accessing services when securitized barriers are implemented. This has nothing to do with being guilty of breaking a policy, but a reasonable fear of harassment.

Another way institutional racism is enacted is through the ways "safety" is articulated, and whose safety is valued. Our analysis of Millennium Library's security screening process suggests that racial anxiety is a source of fears that was used to legitimate the implementation of security screening processes. Millennium Library is a space where patrons are likely to be Indigenous, while library workers are overwhelmingly non-Indigenous people (Galvan, 2015; Hudson, 2018; Kumaran & Cai, 2015; Schmidt, 2019) , and race relations can be tense. This tension creates racial discomfort, but discomfort is not the same as being unsafe (DiAngelo, 2016). Racial discomfort describes the feeling white people often experience when in the presence of Black and Indigenous people and people of colour when they are uncomfortable, and perceive themselves to be under threat. Research shows that this threat is an unsubstantiated perception, made possible through residential segregation that enables white people to control/manage if and when they interact with BIPOC communities, and can largely arrange their lives to avoid the experience. Notably, in most places BIPOC people cannot arrange their lives to avoid white people or institutions, and are at greater risk of experiencing race-based violence.

These instances are likely not only shaped through racialization, but also class, gender, colonialism and disability. Oftentimes, behaviours which do not align with normative white and middle class behaviours are marked as deviant and merit intervention by librarians or by police. In many instances, BIPOC people existing in public space can be enough to make white people feel uncomfortable, regardless of the behaviours of those people (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2005). On a larger scale, this "racial threat" hypothesis has been tested (Carmichael & Kent, 2015) and found racial and economic inequality to be a significant predictor of size of municipal police forces across Canada.

From the oral reports and the CBC analysis of incidents, it seems that racial fear and discomfort have largely driven the securitization policy, and the more the library management defends them, the more strongly they reinscribe racial tropes around violence, and cast the library as a normative white, middle class space dedicated to white comfort, with little attention to the safety of BIPOC patrons.

THE PROBLEM WITH "SECURITY"

The library security screening is one among many examples of the increased policing of access to public benefits that has accompanied cutbacks to social services (Chan & Chunn, 2014; Gilmore, 2009). It relies on the idea of "deserving" and "undeserving" recipients of public space and investment, which has been cultivated in order to justify restricting access to certain groups of people. Research has shown that increased securitization leads to increased criminalization— not higher incidents of crime, but higher incidents of people, most often poor and BIPOC communities, being marked as deviant and thus brought into contact with the criminal punishment system (Beckett and Herbert, 2008; Ritchie, 2016; Vitale, 2017; Wacquant 2009). Rather than making communities safer, they introduce opportunities for bias and harm. The library manager knows this and reported "When you have special duty constables in the library space, they start arresting people, because that is what police do" (Cuddy to May 22 meeting of PCSP). The same goes for security guards, who are trained with the same lens as police (i.e. people who *look* safe vs. people who *look* unsafe) and who are instructed to call the police if there is ever an incident that exceeds their pay grade. Increasing security—even when it is not an increase in police—also increases criminalization.

Policing and security guardianship do not prevent crime. How do we know this? Because there is no reliable correlation between rates of policing and rates of crime—they fluctuate independently of each other (Griffiths, 2014). Over the past thirty years, crime rates in Manitoba and Winnipeg have been falling. Over the same time period, the rate of police officers per 100,000 population has increased at both the provincial and municipal levels. This may cause some to assume that the crime rate is falling *because* of increased policing. However, despite massive investments in policing in Manitoba that have been concentrated in Winnipeg, the crime rate began to go up again in 2014. Moreover, the crime rates have also been going down across Canada—including in provinces where there have not been the same increases in policing (for example, BC and Saskatchewan [Statistics Canada, 2019a; Statistics Canada, 2019b]).

Sometimes, increasing policing increases the crime rate. For example, if the strategic direction of a police force shifts from responding to calls to proactively policing behaviours that are considered 'disorderly' (but not necessarily dangerous)—like panhandling, public intoxication, squeegeeing, or sleeping in parks—then the rate of those "crimes" will go up just by virtue of more police noticing them and counting them (Harcourt, 2005; Bayley, 2005; Bittner, 1970). Additionally, the crime rate itself is not an accurate representation of the range of harms people suffer. It is only a representation of police behaviour—or, the harms people suffer that are against the law that the police come to notice. Many forms of harm are drastically under-counted—for example, sexual assault and domestic violence tend to be underreported for many reasons including the reality that police are not very good at solving those problems. In sum, the crime rate is not an accurate representation of harm and violence in society, and fluctuations in crime rates are more likely to be related to changes in social conditions, changes in police priorities or resource distribution, or changes in the definition of a particular behaviour as 'crime' (Ericson, 2005).

Policing and security rely on the idea of deterrence. This is the assumption that the presence of security and the likely possibility that one could be caught by the police should deter people from committing crime or violence. Police rarely catch someone “in the act,” and security screening is totally ineffective at eliminating the possibilities of violent incidents (Bittner, 19700. Instead, they are theatrics—mechanisms of social control—that are meant to shape people’s conduct. They ensure that people who have been profiled by security and police before make their own decisions not to come around in the first place—and we know from research that those most likely to have had these bad experiences and been treated repeatedly as suspects are Black, Indigenous, poor, and gender non-conforming people (Mogul et al. 2012). The security guards themselves don’t have to practice any discrimination in order for the security checkpoints to have the effect of screening out people of colour.

We might make similar claims about the library's incident reporting system. When intoxication is marked as a "serious incident" city councillors and the public can be alarmed by skyrocketing incidents. But this data exists outside of evidence of harm. When we use police-centred definitions of harm, we miss the harms caused by institutional racism, cuts to health care and affordable housing, and ongoing dispossession caused by resource development, to name a few. These harms and violence are at the root of the crises that play out in the library.

Appeals to increased policing and technologies of policing—such as the installation of security checkpoints—come from genuine feelings of unsafety that need to be taken seriously. There are many people who feel insecure and unsafe downtown. While policing and security are likely to be successful at reducing *feelings* of unsafety and discomfort among people who are not directly experiencing vulnerability, policing and security infrastructure will not actually improve the conditions of safety for those who are most vulnerable to harm.

THE BROADER CONTEXT

The struggle over who belongs in the public library is a reflection of broader issues in Winnipeg, and across Canada. Since the 1980s, cutbacks to social programs have resulted in significant gaps in the social safety net. Wages have stagnated, while the cost of living has soared. Inequality and poverty have increased, while more and more households are just one paycheque away from losing their homes (Bezanson, 2006; McKeen & Porter, 2003).

At the same time, public resources and spaces have become increasingly constrained and commodified. Rather than being provided by governments and funded collectively through taxes, many social programs—in healthcare, housing, municipal services, and so on—have been outsourced to private companies, which then provide the service for a profit. The government looks to the market to solve public problems and distribute public resources (Weber, 2002). This is an unrealistic expectation which results in significant pressure on individuals and families (Bezanson & Luxton, 2006).

This section provides a broader assessment of Winnipeg's downtown in order to contextualize Millennium Library's decision to implement security screening. It is important to understand screening as part of a larger process of displacement of poor, under- or unhoused people, and to understand this as part of a racial and colonial process.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG

The concerns about security at Millennium, and the impacts of racializing the space of downtown Winnipeg go hand in hand with plans for "urban renewal". Owen Toews' recent book, *Stolen City: Racial Capitalism and the Making of Winnipeg* (2018), is required reading for understanding the larger context of urban development that privileges the plans of capitalist developers over those of the less wealthy, largely Indigenous and newcomer communities in Winnipeg's downtown. Toews argues that in recent decades, downtown has been a site of renewed conflict between people who call downtown home, and capitalist developers with a renewed interest in its profit potential (2018). Millennium Library is literally at the centere of the downtown area where developers have focused most intensely on creating conditions for private investment. Millennium Library finds itself in the middle of Winnipeg's Sports, Hospitality, and Entertainment District (SHED). It is adjacent to (and part of the same skywalk system as) the hockey arena, True North square, the Shark Club, and other businesses that have bet on this developer-led vision of urban renewal.

At the same time that governments have provided subsidies to developers, they have overseen gradual but severe cutbacks in provincial and federal funding for housing, healthcare, and welfare, pushing many of downtown's existing residents into deeper poverty, and some into homelessness. While the social safety net is clawed back, Provincial and Municipal funding for policing continues to rise. Under these already vulnerable conditions, people who use drugs or suffer from mental illness have become exponentially vulnerable to the harms that stem both from lack of support, and from increased policing and surveillance.

One of the central themes in this vision of renewal is the idea that in order to have spaces that draw (desirable, wealthy, suburbanite) "people" downtown to spend money on entertainment (and alcohol), the people that already live (and drink and entertain themselves) downtown have to disappear. Toews argues that the taken-for-granted idea of who is a desirable patron of the SHED is imbued with generations of racism and classism that have been built into the very structures and processes of urban development in Winnipeg.

These ideas also animate policing strategies: they help the public to make sense of the idea that "public intoxication" is undesirable, even as developers encourage the proliferation of bars, restaurants, and fenced-in semi-public street parties. This is a racialized process, where upper and middle class, usually white Winnipeggers are encouraged to congregate downtown, to consume alcohol and other substances, and to act exuberantly. When they do so, it is not considered a problem. The important contrast here, is that when poor, homeless people, especially Indigenous people, similarly consume alcohol and other substances downtown, they are labelled as a threat to public safety and forcibly removed.

> "We need to fight for more democratic decision-making and a strengthened public sector that prioritizes unprofitable safety concerns … It is also necessary, however, to understand the social forces that make people vulnerable to apprehension [in this case, exclusion]. We need to deal with things that tend to force people into the street, such as the denial of satisfactory food, shelter and health care. If substance abuse combined with public presence is a problem, then collective investment in addictions treatment and affordable housing (or cash to occupy bars and taxis) will prevent the practice. Beyond this, we need to understand the property ownership structures in which large segments of society are denied access to vital goods such as shelter. We need to question the social relations of private property and the state-supported right to exclude. The Winnipeg case is practically and symbolically fitting because it is Indigenous people who are typically removed from urban land … The enactment of private property in North American cities rests upon the prior dispossession and removal of Indigenous peoples—an essential foundation of North American society that normalizes the use of force against Indigenous people and others in order to ensure exclusive access to land by deserving settlers. This is a colonial norm that has been explicitly utilized by Winnipeg's Downtown BIZ—and less explicitly by BIDs in other cities—in order to achieve the production of more profitable urban space." (Toews, 2011, p. 39)

Millennium Library's securitization efforts are related to the creation and policing of the SHED, where Millennium is located. Since the SHED cannot have check-points on its entrances, the Downtown BIZ has outreach patrols who search for "individuals at risk", targeting them for removal from the downtown through their relationship with the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) cadets. Until recently, the library was one of the spaces where downtown residents who are increasingly squeezed out of a gentrifying downtown could take a deep breath, access information to plan

for their immediate and future needs, read, watch TV, send and receive emails, hang out, and safely medicate. The importance of this space has gone unnoticed to people who have the money to consume alcohol and drugs, watch sports, and socialize in the bars and entertainment complexes surrounding the library, not to mention check their emails on their own private devices.

The policing of Business Improvement Zones is a product of the privatization of public resources and priorities. The Zones are invested in making downtown more profitable for businesses, not necessarily for the people who live there. The installation of checkpoints at the entrance to the library is a strategic move on the part of city bureaucrats in a war over public space, and it can be understood as a statement of their interest in protecting developer profits over furnishing poor people's attempts to live healthy and self-determined lives downtown. It is happening alongside the RFP for clearing out homeless encampments, and the sale of portage place. The library has positioned itself on the side of private interest, instead of on the side of public interest and public space.

The installation of security checkpoints at the library has revealed that the people who are making decisions about the library are not the ones whose lives—including social lives, and work lives—depend on it. **Now, the library is in a position of actively contributing to the conditions that make its most marginal community members even less secure and erode their life chances**.

RACIALIZATION OF SPACE

Racist policies like the security screenings matter. They create both real and perceived barriers for BIPOC communities to access public spaces which are ostensibly available to all members of the Winnipeg public. In addition, they paint a picture for the public about who is welcome at the library and who is not. Through the security policies and actions, who is targeted and sent away, and through the public testimony of the library administrators, we are seeing a picture of Millennium Library that clearly states that Millennium Library is for white, middle class patrons, not BIPOC community members.

In studies of racialization and criminology, we talk about this process as the "racialization of space" (Razack, 2002). We see this process actively unfolding in the public conversation around Millennium. The library administrators have repeatedly painted a picture of Millennium as violent and frightening. Their discussions have used dog-whistle racism to suggest to listeners that particular populations—especially poor Indigenous people—are dangerous, without explicitly naming which group they are talking about. Sociologist Ian Haney-López argues that dog-whistle politics are "coded racial appeals which carefully manipulate hostility toward non-whites" (2015). Dog-whistle remarks leverage racial tropes without explicitly naming the racial group, and are thus deniable, and may seem innocuous to some listeners, though they often signal racialized meanings that are widely understood. Using dog-whistle tropes, the library administration has suggested that "gang members" are a problem at the library—in Winnipeg, we are to understand gang members as Indigenous people, even when that is not made explicit.

This process works to mark Millennium as a racialized space, and those who operate within it, particularly those who are understood as a "problem," as racialized and criminalized. This applies similarly to discussions of downtown Winnipeg, which is already coded as Indigenous space. The more the library reiterates that this space is under threat by Indigenous patrons, the more those tropes circulate in the press and inform public policy. Thus far, it seems that the PCSP has unproblematically accepted these tropes (with the exception of when Councillor Rollins called Ed Cuddy's use of "traditional clientele" into question on April 4th, 2019). This can reinforce the racist ideas that already exist about downtown, and provide fodder for those who have labeled Winnipeg as Canada's most racist city.

These tropes can serve broader interests of gentrification and redevelopment. This is an old process of Indigenous dispossession made new, wherein the city clears Indigenous people and poor people from downtown to allow for more "desirable" populations to make use of the space (Toews, 2018). In this way, recirculating racialized tropes creates the political conditions in which Millennium Library might be stripped of resources in order to justify reclaiming that space for "better" patrons—whiter, richer. This guts the public library of its mandate and instead allows it to be a tool of redevelopment and dispossession, rather than space for community development for all.

Limiting access to a space is an exclusionary vision of security and is likely to lead to broader insecurity. Although there is no perfect analogy for a library, which is wholly unique in its tradition of inclusiveness, one might imagine it as a community that has just decided to deal with feelings of unsafety by building a gate around it—becoming a 'gated community'. In this context, the library has been redefined as a space under attack from the public instead of a public space. The "worthy public" has been redefined, and there is no investment in the safety of those who are being redefined as safety problems: poor people, racialized people, Indigenous people, drug users, disabled people, survivors of trauma and state-violence. Instead, the library, as a single public institution, has facilitated the casting-out of "disruptive" individuals from a public space. As such, it transforms the discourse of public service from one of welcoming a broad public, to one of defending community space for only a small portion of the community.

HOMELESSNESS AND SPACE

Homeless people must, by virtue of being homeless, live out their everyday lives in public spaces—sidewalks, parks, libraries. When sleeping, sitting, peeing, or even just being, are made illegal in these spaces, homeless people are, in effect, made to be criminals (Mitchell, 2002). They are at the highest risk of being victimized by property or violent crime, but are the same people who are defined as being threats that need to be screened out of the library—even though their access to the library is likely to keep them safer. When homelessness, or the behaviours associated with homelessness, is viewed as a crime, instead of as a broader set of social concerns about the health and well-being of all members of society, and, when communities, businesses and local organizations take it upon themselves to 'solve' these crimes, the solution is almost always an exclusionary spatial fix. That is, the 'solution' is to push out the marginalized.

The comfort of library patrons and workers is being prioritized over the actual physical safety of those being screened out. The problem—which is one of broader social insecurity caused by lack of public investment—is being re-defined as the people suffering these problems (Madden & Marcuse, 2016). To respond to these problems with policing and security infrastructure is to allow concerns to be framed only in terms of the disruption people cause to a space, rather than the disruptions going on in their lives. This is a pattern that tends to be repeated over and over, with increasing brutality against those who are increasingly marginalized. .

Some of the conflict that library workers describe in their work is the result of a lack of spaces where people can address everyday needs, including safe spaces to use drugs or alcohol. It is not difficult to imagine offering 24 hour safe spaces downtown that are oriented toward a range of social and other needs. If the library advocates for the proliferation of public spaces downtown that were safe, offered warmth and food, and staffed by people who had training in harm reduction and peer support, it would be beneficial both to those people who would rather use those spaces, and to library staff who would rather preserve the library as a space for people with information needs. In the absence of those spaces, keeping people out of the library only increases vulnerability and potential volatility outside the doors of the library.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Rather than investing in innovation, staff, and new programs to attract more people, the library administration is locking down and driving people away. As the library's own reporting reveals, most of the incidents that have been constructed as 'violence' are actually incidents of disorder or discomfort. Those incidents of interpersonal or self-inflicted violence that have occurred would not be screened out by the library's security measures. This lays bare the fact that what is actually being addressed in the security checkpoints is not incidents that cause discomfort, but people. You cannot screen out a potential incident at the front door—you can only screen out a person who has characteristics that have been associated with "incidents"—or, in this case, with causing discomfort to the preferred patrons of downtown.

Screening hurts everyone. While security screening like we see at Millennium disproportionately impacts marginalized people, make no mistake that all library users are negatively impacted, as is the social fabric and potential for community development. At the most trivial, security screening is a time consuming process that unnecessarily slows access to library services and creates inconveniences. Screening subjects people to bias and harassment by security workers, who generally lack training in anti-racism and cultural competence.

More damaging for democracy, though, is the pedagogy of screenings. Public pedagogy research argues that people learn through the everyday structures of public space and culture (Burdick, Sandlin, O'Malley, 2013). Through this lens, we must reflect on what library users learn from their experiences of security screening. Bag screening and metal detectors teach people to expect surveillance in order to access public space. This approach to over-surveillance is linked with authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 2007), traditionally been considered anathema to democracy. Further, securitization teaches people that there is a significant threat and that they should be afraid. Especially when the threat at Millennium has been unsubstantiated (see our section on False Premises, as well as Appendix A, Response to Library Services report), this unnecessarily generates racialized fears. All of this is unnecessary and degrades the experience of using the public library.

This decision about how to allocate resources and what to prioritize indicates a refusal to embrace all of the community and the best practices of community-led librarianship. It puts our library at risk in that lack of investment, lack of usership, and scaring the public out of using the space (either through the screening processes or by publicly describing Millennium as a dystopian nightmare) iteratively drive down user engagement, which makes it more likely the City and Province will stop investing. In many cities across Canada, successful libraries have been under attack. Those with low gate counts have been closed, had hours limited, and have gone to self-service models, which opponents argue kills the space, turning them into convenience stores for books, rather than robust community spaces. The impact of this for users is likely to be decreased programming, decreased hours, decreased support by librarians and library workers, and a less healthy, more vulnerable library system.

Based on our analysis of the relevant literatures and data, the following is a summary of our recommendations found throughout the report (the full list of recommendations can be found in Appendix D).

- **Remove the security screenings.**
- **Develop an "exit strategy"** for removing security screening and developing a culture of supportive safety with firm deliverables, strategies for community and staff engagement, and deadlines.
- **Increase staffing**, including paid community greeters, outreach workers, elders, crisis-workers, and in-house security. Library to patron ratios should be improved significantly.
- **Increase supports for staff,** including de-escalation, harm reduction, and anti-oppression training. Increase the Employee Assistance Program and provide immediate counseling post-incident.
- **Consult to develop community-led solutions.** Commit to rebuilding trust in the community. Conduct actual community consultations and rebuild community connections that have been damaged by securitization. In other cities, community-led librarianship has included offering food and drink in the library, partnering with community agencies, and removing barriers to access.
- **Think beyond the library.** Additional safe, warm spaces must be available in Winnipeg. Drop-in spaces and other public spaces need to be opened, not enclosed.

As academics, academic librarians, and community members, we are committed to the success and sustainability of Millennium Library. We invite further evidence-based debate over strategies for improving the library. It is our hope that this report will be useful for revising Millennium's policy around security toward a community-led, holistic approach to critical public librarianship.

The consequences of the Millennium Library security screening policy could not be more stark: a robust, diverse public space that welcomes all community members' leadership and attendance or a locked down, under-utilized, under-resourced library. **Nothing could be safer than an empty building, yet nothing could be further from the mission of a public library.**

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APPENDIX A: RESPONDING TO THE LIBRARY SERVICES REPORT

The preceding report has been in production since the Winnipeg Public Library instituted security screening procedures at the Millennium Library. The Library Services Division released its own report on September 3rd, 2019. This city report, which council requested on April 4th, was required to:

> "consider alternatives to making people safe including an examination of best practices in other similar public facilities in Winnipeg as well as best practices in other Canadian cities and report back with a verbal report in 60 days and a written report in 120 days."

The report provided by Library Services falls short of this mandate in several respects. This appendix describes the deficiencies and explains their impact on the report's conclusions.

1. POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES REPORT

The Library Services report makes seven recommendations on page one. Millennium for All is encouraged by recommendations one through four: to provide increased funding to WPL for Crisis Workers, a community-led cultural provider program, non-violent crisis intervention (NVCI), mental health first aid and substance awareness training for staff, and Community Connections space for library Community Crisis Workers and partner social agencies in the Millennium Library lobby. These requests are consistent with the strategies of other libraries across Canada.

It is important to note that the report proposed community greeters as a volunteer position. However, these are important, skilled, and challenging positions that must be paid and included within the library bargaining unit.

Further, in addition to the trainings listed, anti-oppression training should be required (and paid) for all Library staff. Trainings on substance use awareness should be aligned with harm-reduction strategies, reflecting the best practices of the field.

These non-barrier recommendations lay the foundation for a community-based, supportive and harm-reducing approach to safety, and are necessary investments in building a culture of safety at Millennium and replacing security screening.

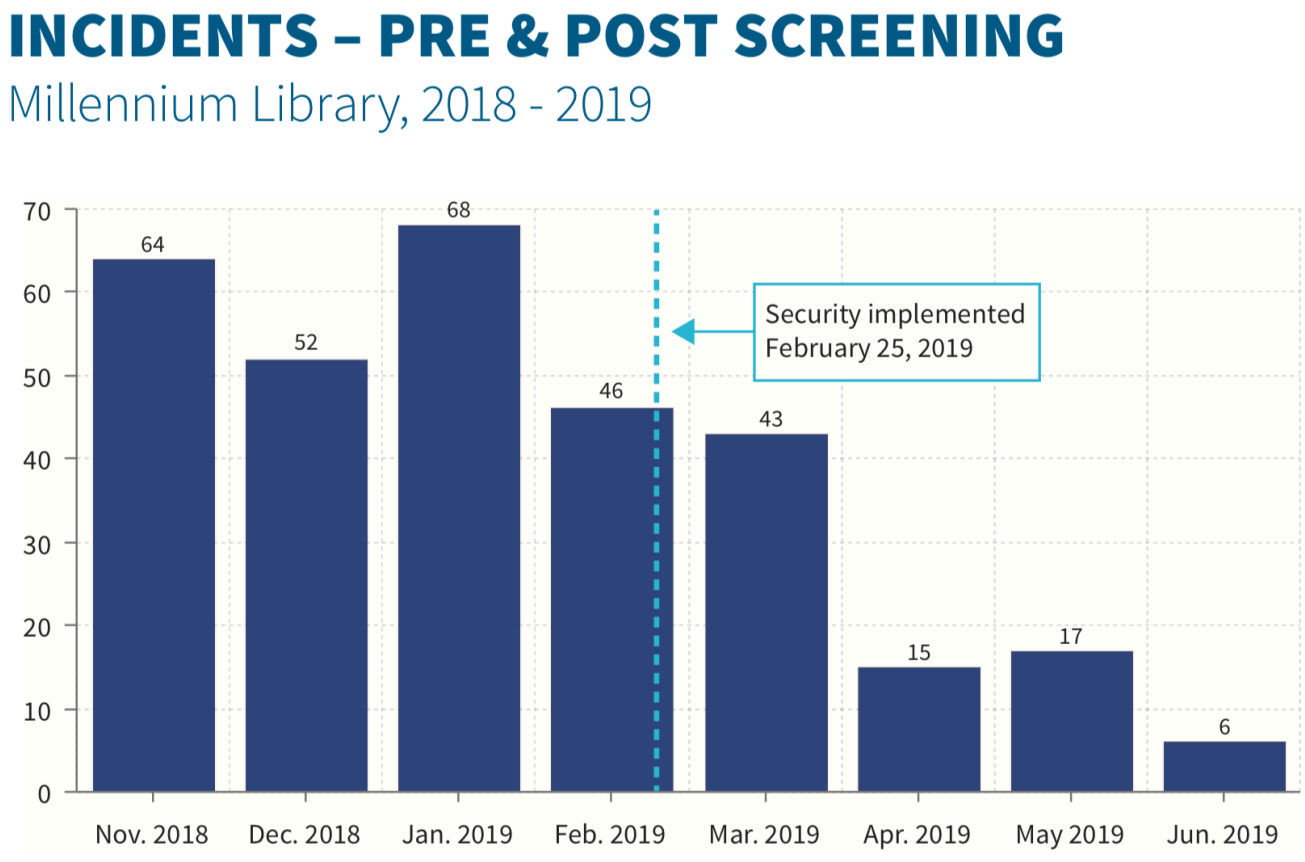
2. PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESENTATION OF DATA IN THE REPORT

Research has shown that cities sometimes release reports to the public that use mathematics inappropriately to further specific political agendas (Esmonde, Curnow & Riviere, 2014). This practice is unethical, unprofessional, and erodes public trust and the ability of citizens to actively shape their communities. We believe that the Millennium Library data analytics are presented in a way that is misleading to the public, and methodologically not aligned with the best practices of quantitative research. This has significant consequences for the reported findings, and degrades trusting relationships between the public and the public service. In this section, we rely on critical numeracy to reinterpret the data provided by the city, and identify the places where the data provided and the claims are misleading.

Media articles following the release of the report cited a number of figures it presented, but none so frequently as the following:

> "A comparison of the four months prior to the introduction of screening with the four months after screening reveals a notable decline in reported incidents. The total number of incidents from November 2018 to February 2019 is 230; the total number from March to June 2019 is 81 – a decline of 64.8%." (page 18)

In Appendix C, the Library Services report offers the following related chart:



This chart and the preceding paragraph present a number of common errors in statistical reasoning:

1. The conflation of a correlation with a causative effect
2. The comparison of unlike things and a failure to account for lurking variables
3. Aggregation obscuring useful information

An introductory course on statistics is likely to include several illustrations of basic concepts and pitfalls in statistical reasoning, and one of the more popular goes like this: in comparing the murder rate and the amount of ice cream sold in New York each month, as ice cream sales rise, so does the murder rate. Should we conclude, then, that consuming ice cream leads to murder (or conversely, that high murder rates drive a taste for ice cream)? NO! Because correlation does not imply causation. In the example, both ice cream sales and homicides may correlate with one another, rising and falling together, but this shared path may be due to both being affected by a lurking variable, such as warm weather. Causal links, the student learns, should be determined not by simple comparisons of numbers, but by reasonable evidence that a change in one factor actually affects the variance in the other.

Deep questions about the causal link between the security barrier and the depicted drop in incidents should be evident from a cursory look at the chart: the drop in incidents does not immediately follow the implementation of the security barrier, but rather after a month of relatively unchanged incidence throughout March. This should immediately call into question the argument that the security barrier caused all of the drop in incidents, and drive us to look for other causes not presented in the chart.

Comparing like categories is essential for data-driven claims to have meaning. In all its other charts, the report succeeds in this, by comparing data from whole years, or for analogous subsets of months. This allows year-over-year comparisons that control for annual patterns in usage or incident reports. In contrast, the above chart compares the aggregate incident reports during individual months to the months around them. This fails the public in an important way: library usage is not evenly distributed across all months, but varies significantly due to seasonal factors including outdoor temperature. In any year, February is very much unlike June, irrespective of policy changes in the interim, and so drawing conclusions from a difference in these numbers is misguided. To see the effect of any potential intervention, it would be better to compare these months to the same months in the previous years. This would at least control for the seasonal changes we would expect to see.

In the written telling of this data, the report errs in another dimension by aggregating four-month periods before and after the security barriers were in place. In comparing November through February to the period of March through June, the report's authors compound the error of unlike comparisons by lumping the coldest months together on one side with the months when warm weather reappears. **The 64.8 percent decline presented in the report is an utterly meaningless figure given these errors in statistical reasoning, and should be disregarded from a policy making perspective.**

It is telling that the library includes in Appendix C a more reasonable chart that does not contain errors of this magnitude, but instead compares January through June figures from 2013 to 2019. This reveals a considerably lower drop in incidents, from 259 in 2018 to 195 in 2019. **This represents a less than 25 percent decline, roughly in line with the decline in visits to the library.** Unfortunately, the report itself obscures this better comparison:

> "Incident report numbers for the first six months of 2019 were compared to the same period from each year from 2013. The results indicated that incident reports declined 24.7% from 2018 to 2019. The most significant change is that incidents of intoxication declined **68.8%** from 2018 to 2019." (page 18)

By following the contradictory report of a smaller decline immediately with an unrelated specific statistic, and bolding only that percentage, the report preferences a larger percent decline at the cost of the reader's attention to the more relevant figure which contradicts the narrative of the security representing a curative solution to the diagnosed threat.

Other areas of concern abound.

The report relies on data from a survey instrument to make claims regarding the feelings of safety experienced by library workers (Appendix B). The survey instrument itself should have been made available so that we can ascertain whether the design of the survey, including the wording of the questions, would skew towards certain responses. We also know that the survey has no statistical validity: it was not a random sample of library workers, but an opt-in survey promoted by the aligned efforts of union representatives and management, and conducted during a time when the issue in question had become polarized in the press and in the workplace. The report's characterization of the survey results also makes claims about changes in feelings of safety pre- and post-security barrier, but the survey was conducted entirely post-security barrier, and relies on recollections of past feelings, seen through the lens of the barrier as a fait accompli. Furthermore, it seemingly includes no questions regarding alternatives to the security barrier, but presents respondents only with options of supporting the security barrier or supporting the previous status quo. For all these reasons, we should therefore look with skepticism at claims that the survey adequately expresses the attitudes of all library workers.

The month-by-month incident report chart, and the statement that the security barrier has resulted in 64.8 percent fewer incidents (page 18) in the four months after the implementation of security barrier than the four months preceding it, implies a reduction of 149 incidents below the expected number for four months. But the Incidents—January to June chart shows that in fact there were only 64 fewer incidents in the six month 2019 period than the same period in 2018. This provides further evidence that **the comparison of unlike seasons has spoiled the**

conclusions of the report regarding the efficacy of security, and the divergence should have given pause to the report's authors in making such claims.

The general aggregation of incident types is problematic, as it invites the reader to conflate all incidents as similarly threatening. In only one location, the second chart in Appendix C, does the report provide any insight into the relative frequency of categories of incident reports, and then only in the supercategory of "serious incidents". But this chart is revealing, in that it shows that the vast majority of serious incidents consist of intoxication, while the majority of time spent by Library Services in previous oral reports was dedicated to describing violence, weapons, and child trafficking. Counts of individual categories of incident reports by month should be a minimal expectation of transparency if we are asked to accept a policy based on these counts.

The repeated use of the January to June block as a comparison aggregates two months of pre-screening data into the 2019 numbers, inflating gate counts and minimizing the perceived negative effects of the security barrier. If January and February 2019 visit counts were consistent with previous years (Appendix D, page 2), the decline in the visit counts for March through June could represent as much as a 44 percent year over year decline. Better access to month-by-month visit counts through recent years could clarify this point. Alternatively, comparing March through June to the same period of previous years would be a minimum improvement.

Misrepresentation and obfuscation of numerical evidence in these matters is not benign — as shown by news reports following the release of the city's report, uptake of the particular percentages repeated in the report shaped the media's and the public's understanding of the nature of problems at Millennium Library and the purported efficacy of solutions. It is crucial that the public not be misled, even through carelessness, where questions of public policy are concerned. Public servants have a duty to correctly represent the facts, and to follow evidence to policy, rather than let chosen policy dictate the evidence they present.

3. CONSULTATION

Despite being an established best practice and a foundational aspect of any successful community development strategy in city management and public librarianship, meaningful public consultation and community engagement has not occurred.

Consultation and community engagement can occur on a scale from manipulation to citizen control (Arnstein 1969). At the bottom of the engagement "ladder", engagement is used to inform participants, but not to enable them to contribute in any meaningful way. In the middle of the ladder, engagement is used to consult with and placate participants, but the participants have no power to ensure that their voices will be heard or their concerns addressed. Finally, at the top of the ladder, participants in community engagements contribute to decision-making, and eventually take control of decision-making.

Following this model, Library Services needs to substantially engage with communities that would potentially be affected by the security screenings. Moreover, it must do more than just organize or attend meetings; it must find ways to ensure that decision-making power is shared with these communities, to ensure that the library addresses their priorities and concerns.

On page 6 of the Library Services report, the "engagement" summary is described. However, sending a small number of administrators and staff to an event planned by independent citizens is not an appropriate claim to engagement. The forthcoming report from summarizing this event shows widespread interest in brainstorming and participating in developing solutions. It also demonstrates a near-universal opposition to security screening as the mechanism for creating safety at Millennium. This is not reflected in the Library Services report.

The Library Services report also describes surveys sent to community agencies. We are glad that this outreach was conducted (though their survey design was not aligned with best practices of the field, similar to the problems identified above). The findings from this survey show that the problems faced by Millennium Library are not isolated to the library, and require a larger, community-led strategy, where agencies bring experience and value to the conversation. Some suggested having Elders or kookums on site, providing food and beverages, and expanding staff training (page 8). Notably, **none of the responses suggest that other agencies are conducting airport-style security screening**, despite the shared concerns. We believe that more substantial engagement with a wider variety of agencies is required to build on these findings.

Most notable is an absence of engagement with the communities most likely to be negatively impacted by the security policy. Where are the consultations with underhoused people, drug-users, disabled people, refugees, trans people, survivors of sexual assault, etc? The Library Services team needs to hear from impacted people and groups, and use that engagement to rebuild trust by incorporating teachings and learnings from these groups into policy.

We have also been told that several agencies submitted separate reports critical of the policy, which were not noted in the report. Additionally, we are aware of a number of letters of complaint and other correspondence the public have provided to the library with their concerns. The Library Services report makes no effort to quantify or incorporate these voluntary, community-initiated engagements with the evaluation of the security barrier.

It is our professional view that Millennium Library, WPL, and Community Services should dedicate funding and staff time to coordinating a robust community engagement strategy based in the best practices of community development and urban planning principles. Engagement should take place BEFORE a policy is put in place, when it has the potential to meaningfully shape decision making. Consultation after the fact often works against trust-building and efficacy, as it can feel tokenizing and symbolic, without the potential to influence policy. This erodes public trust and breeds skepticism. Library Services must reach out and work to rebuild trust with patrons, agencies, and other community groups whom they have alienated, ignored, and pushed out of Millennium.

4. STAFF SAFETY CONCERNS

Staff at Millennium have legitimate concerns about their workplace, and they deserve better. However, the staff survey and the findings from it do little to advance a comprehensive assessment of their safety and well-being.

On a methodological note, the employee survey design is problematic and leading, and the data extracted from the survey results should be read with an understanding of its limitations. What we would like to stress here is that WPL workers have many concerns that the survey did not address. The survey focused narrowly on one aspect of security, in order to produce "data" to support the screening, and thus missed the opportunity to address other avenues toward safety in the library, including feeling understaffed or job precarity. For example, they did not ask if the security measures, as implemented, were the most effective option or whether the other measures could have been effective without decreasing gate counts. The relative feelings of comfort claimed by many staff in the surveys is possibly due to the relative increase in staffing levels (due to the significant decrease in gate count for the period).

The report also introduces a new concern for library workers. In most cities in Canada, library workers, like other public servants, have been under attack, with decreasing budgets and a move toward automated check-outs which are not operated by library staff. With a 25-32% drop in gate counts, the emerging concern is whether Millennium will be vulnerable to budget cuts as fewer patrons visit. We are concerned about the sustainability of Millennium funding, and are committed to fighting for increased staffing and robust funding for WPL.

CONCLUSIONS

We find the Library Services report extremely disappointing. Rather than taking their job seriously and using the six months well, library management wasted the public's time and delivered a poorly argued, mathematically questionable report that lacks serious engagement with scholarly research and community consultation.

For a report by librarians, the public should ask: Where are the citations? Where is the information? Where is your commitment to serving the public?

APPENDIX B.: OPEN LETTER ON MILLENNIUM LIBRARY SECURITY SCREENING PROCEDURES

Dear City of Winnipeg Community Services,

As a librarian working in downtown Winnipeg, I am deeply concerned with the excessive security measures taking place at the Millennium Branch of the Winnipeg Public Library. Communities that are already vulnerable, whether racialized or marginalized in other ways, suffer disproportionately from these types of measures, yet are among the key constituencies with whom Millennium strives to support and engage. Additionally, these intrusive security procedures may indeed endanger library workers. By contributing to a climate of fear and suspicion, these measures heighten tensions and could potentially provoke unpredictable responses instead of building community trust[1].

The common ground we all share is that we want workers and patrons to be safe, comfortable, and welcome in Millennium Library. **Library workers deserve safety in their workplace, and our profession works hard to find ways to achieve this that are not at the expense of the communities and patrons we serve.**

Community Services needs to support WPL in finding alternative evidence-led solutions that adequately minimize risk to library workers, without increasing the barriers to Library access that many residents in Winnipeg face. Additionally, The City of Winnipeg and Community Services need to more fully understand the important role that Millennium plays in the downtown ecosystem, and listen to the stories of people who live in the community, so they can more fully value the incredible work and services being done by WPL.

While the new security measures apply to everyone equally, they disproportionately negatively affect people from racialized communities, as well as people who have been subjected to violence and trauma.

We know, through years of study, that police and private security firms unfairly target and respond with violence to racialized and otherwise stigmatized people. There is a clear consensus that Black and Indigenous residents are disproportionately targeted by police and suffer disproportionate violence by police.[2] This is also true of private

[1] Ballantyne, Steve W. “Why Crime Prevention May Backfire”, Canadian Security Magazine, https://www.canadiansecuritymag.com/Risk-Management/News/Why-crime-prevention-may-backfire/Page-2.html

[2] See Robyn Maynard, “Opinion | Over-Policing in Black Communities Is a Canadian Crisis, Too.” *Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/04/24/over-policing-in-black-communities-is-a-canadian-crisis-too/

security forces.[3] For refugees and other people members of the general public who have experienced situations of violence, check-point-like setups are incredibly traumatic, and likely to provide a significant barrier to entry.

This action effectively reverses the hard work that WPL has put into providing services and outreach to many underserved people in Winnipeg.[4] Libraries are one of the few places trying to provide these inclusive services and programming, and can contribute greatly to community wellbeing.[5]

These security measures are likely to increase the overall lack of safety for both workers and patrons.

Evidence suggests that this type of 'security theatre' can, in fact, have the complete opposite effect and, by reinforcing stereotypes and negative perceptions, encourage violent reactions.[6] It is important that Community Services and WPL reject the false sense of security that comes with this type of approach, and the false dichotomy that suggests that in order to protect library workers, we have to endanger and exclude library patrons. More than anything because this type of reaction – raising tensions, eroding trust, exposing everyone to intrusive searches – is more likely to increase violence. It has set library workers and patrons alike on edge. Creating this climate inside the Library also increases the risks outside the Library, which are also spaces patrons and workers have to travel through.

Library workers are vulnerable when Libraries are understaffed and under-resourced[7]

[3] See Markwick, Nicole, et al. "Exploring the Public Health Impacts of Private Security Guards on People Who Use Drugs: A Qualitative Study." *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, vol. 92, no. 6, Dec. 2015, pp. 1117–30. *PubMed*, doi:10.1007/s11524-015-9992-x. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26453195

[4] Winnipeg Public Library. "Our Services" https://wpl.winnipeg.ca/library/ourservices/sectionmap.asp

[5] See Butler, Marcela Cabello and Stuart M. "How Public Libraries Help Build Healthy Communities." *Brookings*, 30 Mar. 2017, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2017/03/30/how-public-libraries-help-build-healthy-communities/

[6] "Creating an unwelcoming, almost jail-like, heavily scrutinized environment, may foster the violence and disorder school administrators hope to avoid." (349) Mayer, Matthew J. and Peter E. Leone. "A Structural Analysis of School Violence and Disruption : Implications for Creating Safer Schools." (1999). https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-Structural-Analysis-of-School-Violence-and-%3A-for-Mayer-Leone/c35192257aeec9a16bc3699aac59006e5723fff5

[7] Katie McBride "Librarians in the 21st Century: We Need to Talk About Library Security." *Literary Hub*, 21 June 2017, https://lithub.com/librarians-in-the-21st-century-we-need-to-talk-about-library-security/

WPL is not the first library system to consider how to improve staff safety and security.[8] The general consensus from the library community, however, is that excessive security such as searches is to be avoided at all costs,[9] as they are counterproductive and detrimental to the trust and relationship between libraries and their communities. Instead, library professionals recommend "prioritizing preparedness and confidence for their staff over more rigid security procedures like additional guards or entry checkpoints. Overall, library administration and employees are doing their best to walk a fine line between keeping patrons safe and maintaining the openness that makes libraries such a vital part of their communities."[10]

In other cities, additional supports have been provided by cities to library workers to help with consistent and reliable code-of-conduct enforcement, frequent and rigorous de-escalation training, effective communications through all levels of staff, increasing safety through spatial replanning, and ensuring that there are enough staff present at all times and in all areas that no individual needs to deal with incidents alone.

Having Security on-staff, rather than contracted out, is another way that libraries can address training people to appropriately appreciate the particular balance of creating a space that does not stigmatize, but also ensures the physical safety of all present. This ensures that security staff are familiar with the values of the library and their role in upholding those values. Because of the lack of transparency and community engagement on this decision, it is unclear which of these alternative risk management strategies—if any—were considered and pursued.

These security measures will likely lead to decreased use of the Millennium facility, which may be used to justify further cuts to their services.

Understandably, the active presence of such security measures will serve as a powerful disincentive for many members of the WPL community, and will greatly reduce the use of what has always been a heavily- used and vibrant space.[11] Physical searches at the library conducted by private security may on paper not to appear to target any specific group of people, but this ignores the subjective effect of decades of harassment based on race, poverty, and other stigmatized characteristics. The end result will be that Millennium library will be used only by those who do not feel threatened by heightened security: white, housed, middle-class Winnipeggers. This cannot

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[8] See Calgary: https://www.thestar.com/calgary/2018/12/12/we-are-a-place-for-everyone-how-the-calgary-public-library-is-confronting-social-issues.html Regina: https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/reginas-central-library-a-battleground-over-workplace-safety

[9] "And since I know of no libraries that screen their patrons for weapons at the front door, we also face the unfixable issue of people bringing legal or illegal guns or knives into our facilities without our knowledge." Albrecht, Steve. *Library Security : Better Communication, Safer Facilities,* American Library Association, 2015.

[10] Jennifer Dixon, "Guns in the Library : Safety & Security", *Library Journal*, Feb 05, 2018 https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=guns-library-safety-security

[11] Lara Rae "Winnipeg Library's New Security Approach Creates 'Draconian and Humiliating Barrier'." *CBC*, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/pov-lara-rae-winnipeg-library-safe-space-1.5049365

be the message the City of Winnipeg Community Services sends to its constituents. Government funded libraries must be for the use of all, not effectively geared towards the comforts of a single demographic.

WPL needs autonomy to make their own decisions in a transparent way, and to communicate about those decisions to the community they serve.

In my experience, as a City department WPL was subject to often heavy restrictions on what they could and could not communicate to the general public. This no doubt has led to much of the backlash WPL are facing, as they do not have the autonomy to explain their decision or to backtrack now that it has been made. While not perfect, WPL has demonstrated a much greater understanding of the multiple and varied roles of community services than they have been allowed to express, and the over-control exerted by the City means that WPL cannot make the genuine, trust-based connections with other downtown services that are necessary. I deeply respect Ed Cuddy and the senior management at WPL as colleagues, and believe given the opportunity they strive to do the best for all of their communities. While the community-led meeting of concerned people on March 14th[12] broadened the conversation, it was still not a replacement for a truly public consult.

Security Screenings are not a replacement for appropriate public services for downtown.

The increase in incidents in Millennium is a factor of a number of issues, none of which are easily solvable by metal detectors or bag searches. If, as is likely, this security procedure is a response to the rise in poverty, meth use and the unpredictability of behaviours associated with that, we need the City to call it what it is and provide an appropriate public health solution.[13] The recent closure by the Province of appropriate health care options, such as Urgent Care at Misericordia, has an impact on vulnerable populations and reduces the harm-reduction services available. The refusal of the City and Province to engage in other evidence-backed harm-reduction and addictions treatment initiatives for people who use substances, such as basic treatment centers, goes against all evidence and ultimately puts many people at risk, both inside or outside the Library doors.

These security measures stop Library services from reaching many parts of their community, increase tensions and reduce safety in the downtown area, disproportionately affect already marginalized communities, and erode the role of public libraries in Canada.

Unfortunately, it won't be easy to reverse the damage done to our communities by this process – the children watching their parents get searched before story time, the suburban residents of Winnipeg who have had negative stereotypes of downtown reinforced, the new Canadian communities resubjected to suspicion and control, the

[12] Caruk, Holly. "'It's a dark stain on our city': Millennium Library lovers meet with staff to discuss security measures" CBC News, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/library-patrons-meeting-concerns-security-1.5057661

[13] See Jim Silver, "Fast Facts: Drop the Stereotypes, and Deal with the Real Problem." *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*, https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/fast-facts-drop-stereotypes-and-deal-real-problem

library workers working in an increased climate of fear with on-edge patrons, and Millennium Library itself, which has become isolated from the community that its staff have worked so hard to build.

I urge the Community Services to reconsider this decision, and to engage in a more consultative process to determine what measures might be more appropriate to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all Library users.

Sincerely,

Brianne Selman MA MLIS
Librarian

APPENDIX C: CULTURAL COMMUNITY RESPONSES

"How can it be that the first thing a person encounters entering the Millennium Library is a battalion of guards that almost screams (or at least shouts), "We don't trust you! We are suspicious of you! We fear you!" Libraries are the last and best of our disappearing public spaces that stand for democracy, reason, empathy and human connectedness. No society, or city or library thrives by making decisions or enacting policies based on fear."

—Miriam Toews, writer

"The Millennium Library has been representative of Winnipeg's diverse and vibrant community for years; it has also, in being a place where all are welcome without exception or stipulation, exemplified the spirit of what we want this city to be. Now, with a unilateral decision to institute a screening process, without significant consultation with key stakeholders, all of this is in jeopardy. I'm devastated that community members will be subjected to this experience, these intrusive security protocols, in a place where they should be able to come together."

—David Alexander Robertson, writer

"I am a mother and musician who has lived in Winnipeg for over 20 years. I have enjoyed many hours at the Millennium Library whether it be perusing the books with my children, doing research for various creative projects, listening to and performing live music, or participating in projects with the artists in residence. It is a beloved and important space for my family and community, and I sincerely believe that it should be welcoming and accessible for all."

—Keri Latimer, singer-songwriter

"One of my favourite aspects of participating in the Winnipeg Folk Festival's "In the City" workshops at Millennium Library is the crowd it draws. Not your regular festival-going audience, it's unique and inviting to all people, frequently newcomers to Canada and some of our less fortunate neighbours. It would be terribly disappointing to see that change. I support an open and safe space for all."

—Scott Nolan, singer-songwriter

"While I recognize the importance of workplace safety, it is clear that the measures taken at the millennium library are ludicrous. The decision to screen library users as they enter seems to have been taken without any rigour or diligence. Surely there is a more cost-effective and less confrontational way to keep library users and library workers safe. Instead of recognizing the opportunity we have to use the library as a means to address the very issues that are creating the problem in the first place, we are instead thwarting the possibility of social change and public education through shortsighted fear-based decision-making.Where is our courage? Where is our kindness? Why are we not creating the city that we would all like to live in?"

—Debbie Patterson, playwright and actor

APPENDIX D: RECOMMENDATIONS (COMPILED)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Remove the security screenings.**
- **Develop an "exit strategy"** for removing security screening and developing a culture of supportive safety with firm deliverables, strategies for community and staff engagement, and deadlines.
- **Increase staffing**, including paid community greeters, outreach workers, elders, crisis-workers, and in-house security. Library to patron ratios should be improved significantly.
- **Increase supports for staff**, including de-escalation, harm reduction, and anti-oppression training. Increase the Employee Assistance Program and provide immediate counseling post-incident.
- **Consult to develop community-led solutions.** Commit to rebuilding trust in the community. Conduct actual community consultations and rebuild community connections that have been damaged by securitization. In other cities, community-led librarianship has included offering food and drink in the library, partnering with community agencies, and removing barriers to access.
- **Think beyond the library.** Additional safe, warm spaces must be available in Winnipeg. Drop-in spaces and other public spaces need to be opened, not enclosed.

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

What other libraries are doing:

- Hire community greeters and outreach workers to be the first faces that people see when they enter the Library. Consider locating a crisis worker in the lobby or very close to the main doors.
- Instead of outsourcing, hire security that have job security, better wages, and whose training is rooted in de-escalation and harm reduction practices instead of profiling, containment, and exclusion practices
- Create a culture of welcome by:
    - Hiring and supporting more Indigenous and newcomer staff at Millennium, and commit to providing them adequate workplace support.
    - Providing training for staff and resources for vulnerable patrons, including snacks and beverages
- Follow the recommendations of Steve Albrecht for doing a Security Incident Analysis and a Library Spatial Analysis to increase safety on the floor, instead of just focusing on the door.
- Develop policies to make the library more accessible to people experiencing poverty and homelessness.
- Support library staff by:
    - Acknowledging the uniqueness of the additional workload of Millennium by having different requirements (i.e., demonstrated skills in working with vulnerable communities) and training for Millennium staff positions.
    - Providing sufficient supports for staff. The current Employee Assistance Program is limited and not able to respond to traumatic incidents, leaving staff feeling vulnerable and unsupported. Explore additional dedicated psychological support staff. Provide an adequate decompression room for staff at Millennium.

- Reducing job precarity at Millennium and ensuring adequate staffing to allow workers to respond safely to incidents, as well as increasing part-time hours and hiring more full-time positions.
- Providing anti-racism and anti-oppression training to library staff on a regular basis.

Inviting Services In:

- Hire social workers trained in client-led care to support library staff, as well as to provide resources to the broader community.
- Repair and build relationships with community groups that provide health and mental health supports, harm reduction services, housing support, and other key supports by removing the security barriers and engaging in community consultations.
- Invite relevant community groups and services to co-locate, as in the examples above.

Lessons from Community Organizations:

- Recognize the decades of expertise that community organizations have in dealing with complex situations, and reach out to learn from them by:
  - Creating an advisory committee made up of downtown/West End agencies, including those that participated in the community consultation, to advise the library on social policies and procedures.
  - Developing an annual service plan for Millennium Library that consults with the advisory committee on programming, staff training, collections, etc.
  - Demonstrate a tangible commitment to celebrate and acknowledge diverse downtown communities.
- Replace the airport-style security screenings with well paid and trained community hosts.
- Make the front entry a place of inclusion, rather than a visible sign of exclusion.
- Require and support training for all Millennium staff on de-escalation, and harm reduction, and cultural competency/ anti-oppression.
- Hire additional crisis workers whose first responsibility is de-escalation and support on the library floor.

